

July 20, 2010
Work Session

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION HELD JULY 20, 2010

A Work Session of the City Council of the City of Hopewell, Virginia, was held Tuesday, July 20, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, Municipal Building, 300 North Main Street, Hopewell, Virginia.

PRESENT: Christina J. Luman-Bailey, Mayor
K. Wayne Walton, Vice Mayor
Curtis W. Harris, Councilor
Michael C. Bujakowski, Councilor
Gerald S. Stokes, Councilor
Brenda S. Pelham, Councilor
Jackie M. Shornak, Councilor

Debra W. Pershing, Acting City Clerk
Edwin C. Daley, City Manager

ABSENT: Thomas E. Lacheney, City Attorney
Ann Romano, City Clerk

Mayor Luman-Bailey opened the work session at 6:34 p.m. Roll call was taken as follows:

Mayor Luman-Bailey	-	yes
Vice Mayor Walton	-	yes
Councilor Harris	-	yes
Councilor Bujakowski	-	yes
Councilor Stokes	-	yes
Councilor Pelham	-	yes
Councilor Shornak	-	yes

Welcome by the Mayor. Prayer was offered by Rev. Harris, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

PRESENTATION BY MR. JAMES DAVENPORT

Jim Davenport introduced Louis “Skip” Bafalis, Partner with Alcade & Fay, who provided an overview of Alcade & Fay as well as the services for the City of Hopewell. His role is to take the City’s wish list of projects and turn it into an attractive and viable package for the congressional delegation and House Appropriations Committee. He highlighted Hopewell’s fiscal year 2010 successes. Mr. Davenport provided a status of Hopewell’s two top priorities: (1) HRWTF – install new line to Fort Lee; and (2) Cedar Level Road Improvements. A day each year is devoted to meeting with congress and committees. The history of successes and a return on investment articles from 2007 provided the wrap-up. Council was encouraged to come to Washington, DC again to discuss projects.

DISCUSSION: Whether or not any conflicts of interest exist where one locality may be applying for the same grant as the City of Hopewell; concern about the Appomattox River project, especially the dredging for the City Marina; \$750,000 was given to Petersburg area because they sponsor the project; whether or not Alcade & Fay work regionally on some of the same items (it depends on the project); Mr. Davenport talked about approaching Petersburg to see if Hopewell can become a partner, but that has not happened yet. His suggestion is to go directly to the corps project manager to see if it is possible to take Hopewell marina into consideration for dredging; NOTE: Money goes directly to corps not to the locality. The response is different and competitive every year about what is going forward as far as trends with cities our size obtaining money; Hopewell is represented by two senators and Congressman Forbes and the City should request service from those elected officials. In each of those offices, there is one person handling projects for the State of Virginia; they work with committees that fund the projects. The legislative delegation must make the initial request, and Alcade & Fay works with the committees. Alcade & Fay considers themselves as the City’s office in Washington. The trip to

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D.C. confirmed to Councilor Pelham the need for a lobbyist for the City. A question arose about what funding the City would have received without using Alcade & Fay. The City Manager indicated that he does not believe that staff would have been successful with the projects without Alcade & Fay. There was concern about whether or not the funds we are spending could have been used in another way. The City Manager was asked to advise Council on the best use of those funds. Mayor Luman-Bailey thanked Alcade & Fay staff for coming and complimented them on their accomplishments and flexibility.

REVIEW LIST OF COUNCIL APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Councilor Stokes requested that this item have a public hearing on the proposed Resolution in August. Concerns were expressed that there may be too many public hearings at the August 10 meeting. If the meeting runs over, then the public hearing would be postponed to next meeting. Regarding the listing of the six boards (Hopewell School Board, Planning Commission, Architectural Review Board, ARLS Library Board, Board of Zoning Appeals, and Hopewell Redevelopment and Housing Authority), the City Manager feels that they have a big impact on the City. There are also boards on which term limits cannot be imposed (i.e., the Judge appoints the BZA). Council can make a policy. There is no board that the City Manager is aware of on which the law prohibits length of service. Regarding the Patrick Copeland Site Committee, nothing has been approved on that site, and the City Manager is requesting to dissolve it. Mayor Luman-Bailey indicated that perhaps that committee should be combined, as far as improvements for park the area, with another committee to look at park improvements. Council should meet at the end of August. In the past Dr. Daley requested that meetings be held on an as-needed basis. Some believe that the policy should not be changed. Although there would be no vote at this meeting, if the committees were dissolved, there was concern whether the staff would assume the responsibilities. According to the City Manager, those duties would be assigned to staff upon dissolution. A separate Council meeting will be scheduled for dissolution. Council may give direction at the next meeting. A public hearing will be held on August 10 on the term limits, not dissolution of committees. More time is needed to discuss the Central Virginia Film Office Board before a final decision is made. Council was encouraged to send opinions to Dr. Daley about which boards should be kept and which should be eliminated. There will be a grace period – the committees will not be dissolved until after the August 10 City Council meeting. The citizens need a public hearing for further discussion. It was suggested that an announcement be published in the newspaper about the proposed dissolution directing citizens to contact the City Clerk or council representative whether or not citizens disagree. Other Council opinions did not believe it calls for a public outcry. However, it was suggested that a professional courtesy is provided to the citizens serving on the Boards/Commissions that they are being considered for dissolution. The City Manager assumed the responsibility of contacting them.

DISCUSS COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The City Manager provided a list of priorities, a list of projects already underway, and updates. He discussed new projects for consideration. Council should add additional projects or items that are not moving along under existing projects and pick three or four primary things on which to focus. Council's list of priorities is due to the City Manager by the beginning of August. Council should select five major projects on which to focus. His recommendation six weeks ago was that Council holds an advance somewhere in the City. That recommendation remains on the table. The City Clerk will be asked to send out proposed dates to City Council. The other question is whether or not Council wants a facilitator. Regarding the cost, approximately \$2,000 was spent on the last advance.

REVIEW 2009-2010 CAPITAL PROJECTS

- The proposed uses of these funds are outlined below. The City has already committed to the first nine or ten items. Council has approved these funds and some of them are a vague allocation and there is room for discussion within those parameters.
- There was a question about Recreation & Parks hiring two more people. The City Manager advised that it was a position that was frozen when Malcolm Covington retired last August. Some Councilors' opinion was that now is not the time, monetarily, to hire two more people while acquiring the cost of maintaining Heritage Gardens.
- Regarding the roofing project, according to the City Manager, the City Engineer is drawing up a plan, but it has not yet gone out to bid.

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- In reference to the Hunter House seed money, the Park Service leased the Hunter House to the City for redevelopment of the building to create a museum. The seed money is used for grants. There will be no cost to the City for 40 years.
- In response to a question about whether or not the cost of the restrooms is for construction only; it would still cost to maintain them. There was concern about vandalism to City parks.
- In response to a question about Heritage Gardens being open to the public since it is gated, it is open to the public only during specified hours. It needs to be fixed up and cleaned up then have the gate open during daylight hours.
- There was concern with providing restrooms during the current financial crunch and that perhaps Council needs to look at having a bigger impact on the use of City dollars. The City Manager suggested that Heritage Gardens should not be kept in its current condition. The Mayor provided some history on Heritage Gardens. Some Councilors felt that the idea of a City having its own garden is a wonderful opportunity. Pride in the City of Hopewell should be encouraged such as a victory garden was in past years. There was discussion about buying banners for the lights and purchasing a trolley to show off Hopewell. In response to a question about how many homes could be built on the property if it were sold. Mr. Altman responded four lower end homes. Perhaps the assistance of the local Garden Clubs in fixing up Heritage Gardens would provide improvement. It was suggested that this be discussed at the August Council meeting. The City should have a team going to Fort Lee to promote Hopewell. The City should be cleaned up offering tourism such as gardens, and have a person to actually sweep the streets. When the City shows it is serious, such as minor investment, there will be potential for garden clubs and civic organizations to step forward. Council would like to see a focus on all City parks and playgrounds. Perhaps a committee could be formed from those who served on the committees to be dissolved, such as a beautification committee to look at City parks and playgrounds and security issues such as proper lighting. The Mayor distributed a copy of an excerpt from Council minutes when it voted unanimously to proceed with leasing the Hunter House from the National Park Service. There was some question as to whether or not the City will own Heritage Gardens, which is in Ward #2. A garden club first brought up a request and wanted to pay for a plaque. Councilor Harris offered to coordinate with the Mayor to have a meeting to address Heritage Gardens. Other Councilors agree that they do not want to see the demise of the gardens with the work that has been invested only to be sold in the future and come into disrepair. If there is an opportunity to look at some of the money that has been applied to the parks, then Council should consider using some of it to replace some of the playground equipment which is in disrepair. The City has been in a trend of taking down tennis nets and basketball goals instead of putting some money into a Playground Maintenance Fund. Some of the existing equipment cannot be repaired because of its age; parts are not available. As far as recruiting new citizens such as from Fort Lee, parents look at what is available for children, and the condition of our recreation facilities sends a message where the City's priorities are. The Mayor indicated that this fits in with Council's vision, approved in 2009, about having neighborhood parks and green spaces. Civic organizations and volunteers in immediate neighborhoods would like to be involved. Perhaps some members of the Recreation Commission can coordinate with civic organizations and volunteers to spruce up the parks. Council members were asked to let the Mayor know if there is any interest in serving on such a committee. Dollars should be stretched without sacrificing Heritage Gardens. The
- Sesquicentennial Committee is asking for \$100,000; however, Council proposed \$50,000 and to generate in-kind contributions as a commitment to the project.

Honeywell - Approved Uses

<u>Return to Fund Balance</u>	600,000
Downtown Façade Grant Program	200,000
Mathis Field Restrooms/Concessions	260,000
Courthouse/City Hall Visual Security	80,000
Courtroom Expansion	60,000
Rec Center Roofing	200,000
Energy Savings Grant Match	350,000

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Street Resurfacing	200,000
Cabin Creek Drainage	250,000
Atwater Road, Phase I (50% reimbursed by VDOT)	390,000
Dinwiddie Ave, Phase II (50% reimbursed by VDOT)	280,000
City Park Restroom/Lighting	40,000
Animal Control Vehicle	15,000
Animal Shelter Renovations	35,000
Sesquicentennial Committee	50,000
Telephone System	100,000
Heritage Gardens (renovations and restroom)	40,000
Hunter House seed money	50,000

3,200,000

Capital Fund

Police Vehicles	150,000
Sheriff's Vehicle	30,000
Fire Dept. Vehicle	18,000
Public Works	
Paving	400,000
Equipment	240,000
Parks	10,000
IS/Technology	25,000
	873,000

COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM AMENITIES

The City Manager referred to an e-mail from the City Attorney regarding items needed for technical improvements for Council Chambers. Vice Mayor Walton also wants a “light” when people are speaking at the podium. A green light to speak; amber light to warn when there is one minute left, and a red light when time is up. Another logistical suggestion is relocating the podium to the side so that the camera can capture the speaker and the speaker’s back is not to the audience. This is just a rough estimate and more specific pricing is necessary before it can be discussed. Some Councilors prioritized putting money into playgrounds first. The technological enhancements can wait. Council should proceed with the audio request as far as microphones and speakers are concerned. Other items can be put off until next year. The City Manager suggested moving the podium to the corner next to City Clerk, and recommended pursuing the light system. Councilor Pelham’s concern was to become paperless and she suggested some of the Councilors “test” that process. Laptops could be purchased for Council’s use. Apparently, Prince George provided its Board Supervisors laptops and nobody uses them. The feasibility/benefit to citizens should be researched if Council were to go “paperless.” Councilor Shornak said she would forego a laptop and let other fellow Councilors try it out. Councilor Bujakowski wants an estimate of the cost. The City Manager will obtain four laptops for trial purposes.

OVERSIZED VEHICLES IN YARDS/ OVERSIZED VEHICLES IN PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY

Oversized vehicle storage in residential districts on private property, public property, and on public rights-of-way was reviewed.

- On the proposal under item A (on private property): (1) busses and semi-trailers are prohibited from being parked in yards; (2) must be in the driveway or in the rear yard only; (3) maximum of two recreation vehicles, utility trailers, or watercraft or trailers; (4) no vehicles larger than *_____ feet in length (**to be defined*); (5) cannot be used as living quarters; and (6) must be at least five feet (5’) from property lines and other buildings on site.

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- Item B references public rights-of-way not used for driving: the six items above apply as well as a requirement for an annual permit from the City Engineer.
- Item C references public rights-of-way used for driving (streets, alleys, etc.). The six items above apply in addition to requiring an annual permit from the Chief of Police; \$30 fee; adjacent to owner's residence; wheel base cannot exceed 102 inches; property setback from fire hydrant(s), intersection(s) and driveways; and oversized vehicles can be parked in the public right-of-way for up to 48 hours for loading/unloading purposes.

March Altman provided staff photos of areas representing examples of oversized vehicles in the City. Councilor Stokes felt that there is a need to inform the public rather than ticket citizens. He wants to see good enforcement and good public relations. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing as well as City Council. The City Attorney will be looking into the legalities.

“B” VILLAGE PRIORITIES – Waterfront Plan and Central Hopewell Recommendations

March Altman prepared a list of items in the “B” Village & Waterfront Plan that City Council could begin to implement short term with the aim of achieving long-term investment. The City Manager modified the recommendations:

1. Redevelopment of the City Marina – Bluffs Area

- Work with the Hopewell Redevelopment and Housing Authority (HRHA) to eliminate blight and acquire property for redevelopment activity.
- Work with private developer to redevelop properties located along the Appomattox River, to include the Bluffs and Marina sites, with the appropriate mix of market rate housing and commercial/retail.

2. Rt. 10 Gateway Area

- Initiate discussions with the owner of the Evergreen to gauge interest in the redevelopment of the site in conjunction with the city-owned properties on George Street.
- Work with John Randolph Medical Center to facilitate the creation of an environment conducive for the expansion of the hospital.
- Implement streetscape improvement along Randolph Road (Rt. 10) from the C. Hardaway Marks Bridge to downtown and along 6th Avenue. Improvements would include:
 - Installation of the gateway signage recommended in the Citywide Wayfinding System design.
 - Installation of ornamental cobra head lighting specified in the downtown streetscape design.
 - Plant street trees along the corridors.

3. Appomattox Riverwalk

- Construct a riverwalk/boardwalk along the Appomattox River from the Bluffs site thru the Marina site to the Copeland site as a unifying element of the redevelopment effort.
- Provide greenway trail connections from the adjacent neighborhoods to the riverwalk.

4. 15th Street/Oaklawn

- Installation of ornamental cobra head lighting specified in the downtown streetscape design.
- Plant street trees along the corridors.
- Façade grant program.

5. --

6. –

Prioritize the projects; assign these and the downtown plan to Development and hire a separate business recruiter.

B Village & Waterfront Plan

- Adopt the draft plan to provide the necessary legal framework for implementing the elements above.
- Adherence to the plan provides a larger context for the individual decisions and supports the achievement of legitimate public goals.

Mayor Luman-Bailey indicated previous discussions with the hospital. That could be a priority with the lobbyist this coming year to fund the engineering work. With regard to project #4 (15th Street/Oaklawn Corridor) another idea is to remove it and add to the Route 36 plan that could come from I-295 to bring traffic

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and development into downtown. Citizens have complained about lighting in the library parking lot (across the street from the library), and there should be a brick path from the library leading to City Park.

The City Manager asked Council to look at #5 and #6 for additional priorities. He requested two or three projects for staff assignment. The B Village plan already exists and is paid for. However, nothing has ever been done on it. Several projects have been started but are yet to be completed. The focus should be on a few projects to bring to completion. Regarding the Ferguson property, the City Manager preferred to discuss that in closed session under acquisition/disposition. The City needs to be friendly to the private market to see what is driving it. As a lesson learned from the downtown plan, it is important to review the plan, prioritize, and make modifications as needed. The Mayor requested that Council look at priorities mentioned early in the meeting, digest them, and return with input for prioritization. Some projects have been identified that have good economic development potential. Already in development is some signage, "Welcome to Historic Downtown Hopewell." The City is making good use of CDBG funds. In marketing the City, it would be good to pass a plan that has recommendations in it. Although the plan has already been presented and paid for, until developers can come in to develop the marina, etc. in the B Village plan, and unless it is made available by banks, the City does not have enough money to acquire property on its own. A question arose about whether or not the B Village plan can be integrated into that list. The Mayor cautioned Council that there are items in the plan that are contrary to what the hospital has in their plan based on their own studies. It would be safer to pull things out and call it something else. That plan was done in 2002 and should be updated. Councilor Stokes suggested two years ago that the old library be put to a new use. There are no parking decks or shops. The City tore down Patrick Copeland School because there was purportedly a builder for that site. The City cannot spend money on a plan or tell the hospital what to do to expand. In order to progress, the City needs money. The City wants to create something to cause money to flow; that has been discussed but no action has been taken yet. There was interest in a proposal to provide leadership towards acquiring some money. The City should find a way to tie into some of those projects that are going on around us. Other localities within the Commonwealth, such as Chesterfield County, continue to build. The City may owe too much, and would have to get bonds. The citizens of Hopewell will not pay that much money in taxes. Hopewell would have to borrow money to pay a developer to fix the Marina. Hopewell should market itself to the private sector. When the high school is finished, the City's total debt will be \$43-\$44 million (supported by the tax base) per Elesteen Hager. If Regional is included, it will be about \$70 million.

The recommendation is for Council to assign projects to the Development Department along with completion of the downtown plan. Available funds in the budget now should be used to consider a business recruiter. It would be a \$100,000 position (including benefits), and perhaps there should be consideration of using a company. They would be paid on an incentive basis and pay a portion of estimated taxes to be brought into the City. Some Councilors favored talking about filling this position right away to begin progress.

RECAP OF WORK SESSION ACTION ITEMS

- Staff will send Council a notice of time periods in August/September to hold an advance and whether or not Council wants a facilitator.
- Council will review the list of City projects, make any additions, and submit their priorities to staff.
- A public hearing will be scheduled for terms limits on boards and commission.
- A public notice will be published regarding a proposal to eliminate some boards/commissions and notify those citizens serving on those boards.
- Finally, four laptops will be secured for Council to "practice" with, get new speakers, move the speaker podium to side, and get a speaker's red/yellow/green light.

The City Manager requested a brief closed session (5 minutes) to discuss personnel.

CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Luman-Bailey entertained a motion to go into Closed Session at 9:25 p.m. to discuss Personnel, in accordance with Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1). A motion was made by Councilor Stokes and seconded by Councilor Pelham to convene into Closed Session. Roll call was taken as follows:

Mr. Harris	-	yes
Mr. Bujakowski	-	yes
Mr. Stokes	-	yes
Mr. Walton	-	yes
Ms. Pelham	-	yes
Mr. Shornak	-	yes
Mrs. Luman-Bailey	-	yes

RECONVENE

At 9:36 PM the Mayor reconvened the meeting and asked the following question: “Were the only matters discussed in the Closed Meeting public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements; and public business matters identified in the motion to convene the Closed Meeting?” Roll call was taken as follows:

Mr. Harris	-	yes
Mr. Bujakowski	-	yes
Mr. Stokes	-	yes
Mr. Walton	-	yes
Ms. Pelham	-	yes
Mr. Shornak	-	yes
Mrs. Luman-Bailey	-	yes

ADJOURN

At 9:36 PM motion was made by Vice Mayor Walton, and seconded by Councilor Bujakowski, to adjourn the meeting. Upon the roll call, the vote resulted:

Mr. Harris	-	yes
Mr. Bujakowski	-	yes
Mr. Stokes	-	yes
Mr. Walton	-	yes
Ms. Pelham	-	yes
Mrs. Shornak	-	yes
Mrs. Luman-Bailey	-	yes

Christina J. Luman-Bailey, Mayor

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Debra W. Pershing, Acting City Clerk